

Magazine Feature Section

DRUGS AND CRIME

Of all the human units that comprise the population of a large American city the professional criminal is most hampered in social intercourse with his fellows. The peculiar nature of his activities urges careful discrimination in following the dictates of natural gregariousness.

Thus it came to pass that when the Chinese introduced opium smoking, or, as it is commonly called, "dope," the criminal element was specially attracted to it by the gratification the habit afforded its unique needs. Until then the popular rendezvous of the majority had been pool halls, saloons or some other more or less public place, where eternal vigilance was the necessary concomitant of wisdom.

The dim seclusion of the opium joint offered a convincing semblance of protection to the "gun," "dip" or "prowler" who desired a private confab with his pals. As well did the flame of the little lamp—the focus of all eyes—serve as the center of a circle of story tellers agreeably exercising their imaginations as the "pills" were cooked and smoked; and the carefree minutes lengthened into hours. There was also the faded lure of dope dreams—the grateful "feeling" of the smoker—combining to entice the would-be mental adventurer. Hop was cheap and plentiful.

NEW FAD A WELCOME ONE.

All things considered, the new fad was decidedly welcome to the majority of criminals and in a short time the habit spread from professional crooks to the whole underworld till its devotees included prostitutes, gamblers and dive employees. A few policemen were among the "also ran."

As time went on the price of hop rose high and then higher. The pipe smokers were fast in the grip of a strong habit and believed dire results must inevitably follow its curtailment. To cure the hop habit doctors prescribed morphine. Then it became generally known that a stronger "feeling" than the smoker experienced would follow the eating or injecting of morphine. And morphine, or "white stuff," was cheap by comparison to hop.

Many smokers became users of the white stuff in an effort to break away from the smoking habit under treatment of the medical profession. At the present time opium smoking requires the income of a malefactor of great wealth, and few of these subscribe to the practice.

Many criminals form drug habits in prisons with the mistaken idea that by so doing life will be more endurable. They buy it from, or procure it through, their keepers, who in this way become men of substance.

After this manner the origin, growth and decline of pipe smoking transpired, leaving in its stead the morphine eater, hypo fiend and laudanum user. These misguided humans are growing fewer each day, and their full redemption will best be quickened by dissipating the clouds of superstition and ignorance surrounding drug habits, their treatment and cure.

When opium was on the top wave of its underworld popularity its use spread and gained favor with many people of all walks of life. Most of these were drawn by the powerful magnet of the promise of mental adventure with which fiction and hearsay endowed it. Many moral perverts believed its use had the effect of lending physical vigor to the indulgence of their vicious degeneracy.

JOINTS EASY TO FIND.

There were many hop joints scattered over New York and other metropolitan cities, all doing profitable business under bought police protection. The largest and best of these was operated by two American white men, who shared the profits with a well-known politician. It was situated in Chinatown and earned a reputation for exclusiveness because sightseers were not tolerated and an introduction there involved considerable red tape.

No hiding criminal "wanted" by the police was ever arrested there, although several have told me they were taken immediately on leaving.

Autohypnosis and Not the Drug Causes the Dreams That Attract the "Dope" Fiend.

and voiced the suspicion that they had been "tipped off" by one or other of the proprietors. This place was open about two years, and it was my custom to go there often. I was not then even a "pleasure" or occasional smoker, but went there to meet friends and enjoy their company around the lay out.

There, in the big general room and in numerous private rooms, could be found burglars, strong-arm men, their women-folk; lawyers, doctors, business men, with or without feminine companions. Nor was the upper social world lacking representatives of both sexes these last obviously radiating thrills of fancied incognito.

A well-known author prevailed upon me to take him there to see at first hand what "hitting the pipe" was and his subsequently printed description of the sensations of his experiences brings tears to my eyes. I made up a party of three confidence men, smokers, the fiction writer and myself.

We five took a private room and for hours our searcher for local color was regaled with as satisfying a conversational dream as the most exacting could wish. We were easily successful, by mental suggestion, in waiving the literary person over the borders of self-consciousness into the land of visions.

FUMES INDUCED DREAMS.

Incidentally, while there he became a near Napoleon, with an army and navy to do his bidding. He had

refused to smoke, but we told him simply and convincingly that the inhalation of the pleasing odor arising from the cooking hop pills was sufficient to induce dreams.

The truth is, as a dream producer opium of itself is about on a par with the familiar Boston pastime of eating one's fill of pork and beans. And this is equally true of the assimilation of opium in any of its various forms and extracts.

It has long been known that self-hypnosis is at least partially possible by fixation of gaze—"To this day yogis and fakirs of India throw themselves into a state of hypnotic ecstasy and reverie, by fixation of

gaze," says an authority.

A normal conditioned man who sits relaxed in front of an open grate fire with his eyes fixed on the flames ere long finds himself dreaming, although his intention be not consciously nor subconsciously to indulge in dreams. The opium smoker, by authentic mental suggestion, approaches the layout either consciously or subconsciously with intent to dream. He assumes a reclining position of relaxation. Facing him on the level of his eyes is the small, steady flame of ignited peanut, olive or cottonseed oil. For hours he maintains fixation of gaze upon that bright point of light. Nor

The Opium Den Came as a Comfortable and Unique Rendezvous for Crooks of Every Class and Variety.

is a bundle of junk (morphine). We will swallow some, buy the Atlantic ocean and give it to Andy Carnegie, to play with. But first we will eat. Here is some delicious hash the warden himself cooked, with mixed feelings. Here some punk (bread) and

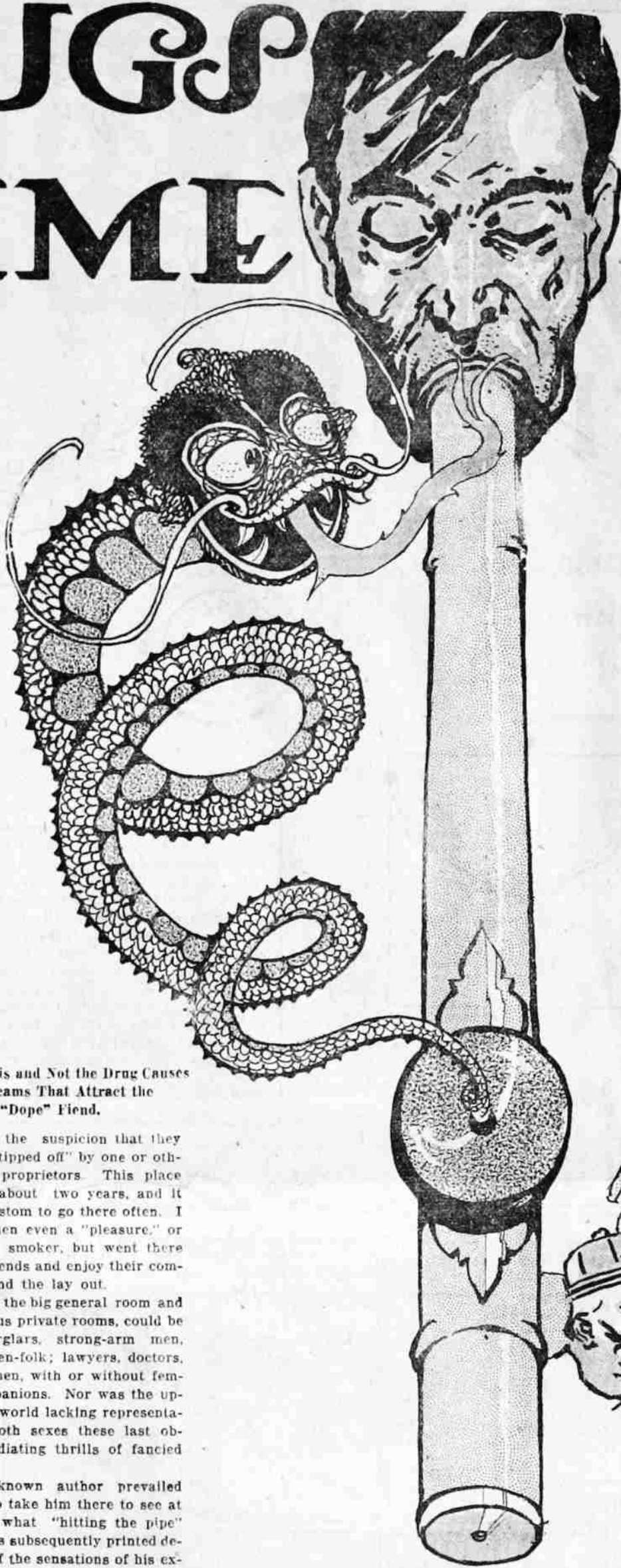
half of these are real professionals, in the fact that they fail to steal enough to support themselves. The majority rely in part upon the earnings of prostitutes, or, in thieves' argot, they have "an ace in the hole." Some few, however, bring up families away from contact with the un-

der world and enjoy their neighbors' respect. The more intelligent, daring and industrious crook soon learned that the habitual use of a drug robbed him of energy by sapping his physical vigor. He became lazy and inefficient and his income suffered appreciably. Those who assumed leadership in crimes requiring assistance learned by experience to discriminate against dope fiends in selecting help. The wisdom of this judgment became so apparent that the dopes must work alone or look to prostitution for a "meal ticket."

IS "DOPE" IMPORTANT?

The only place the dope really figures as a dangerous, blood-curdling sort of pirate is in the newspapers. Curiously enough, when a detected crook is found to be a drug fiend the papers feature it in such a way that instead of exciting pity or a deterrent ridicule, it arouses contempt or fear in the public mind. On the other hand, a drunkard, in a like case, may expect some measure of pity for his habit, or at least a humorous treatment of it in the news reports. This is curious, because the latter is a greater menace to public safety.

Habitual users of morphine as a class are the mildest, meekest set of misguided individuals ever held up



Feminism as She Is Revealed in Rural Parts

Rural kitchens display the shaping struggle of womankind with regard to feminism.

In a distance covered of about 130 miles we met, for instance, the woman, anti-suffragist, whose family and social prestige in the community give her sway, and who therefore does not care anything about the vote; the woman, suffragist, whose narrow experience has led her only as far as a sense of justice in certain practical matters; the woman, suffragist, active and capable, whose efficiency has brought her and her husband prosperity, and who therefore sees as far as more efficiency for women through suffrage.

While her husband, the saddler of the village, mended our much worn pack the saddler's wife entertained

herself with us and managed him. If that hour and a half in their barn-shop was typical of their entire life, there was scarcely a period when she, with her "woman's way," was not putting something over on his "man ways." They were an aged pair, but she was still sweet-faced and killarney-eyed, and still had the physical and spiritual charm of Irish loveliness. They both came from the soil of strong sex lines. She played the happy little game of woman with man that puts the punch in stories of Irish romance. He did the cutting of leather and fastening of rivets with his feebly uncertain hands, but it was she who made the suggestions as to width of straps, how they might go over the shoulder and buckle in place. He turned all such suggestions down and indulged in scornful conversation about "women's rights," which they had heard about through the visits to Johnsonville of a certain summer lady. "If she'd had more children and less

dogs she would not had to take up with women's rights." After much fumbling and fussing he executed his wife's ideas. He fumed and fussed and she coddled and silently bided and managed. The pack was mended, he made the charge, took the money and performed the man's part of the transaction. And we were ready to go on our way. As we went out the door she patted his old hips with her two palms and said: "Ahe, he's me bye, and he's just as much of a bye today as the day I got him."

We descended from the mountains and on the front porch of the big farmhouse met a large and authoritative woman of cheerful manner, in gingham apron and calico dress, with her sleeves rolled to her elbows in the democracy of labor. Across the road, in the hot July sun, the reaper was rattling through the grain and farm-hands were perspiring in their elemental toil. A clean collic, with country manners, greet-

ed us effusively. "Peggy, get down!" the woman protested. "Do I have to put you to bed?" The collic put back its ears at the indirect but familiar command.

She talked of the simple construction of the community, where the poor are taken care of by their neighbors who are more prosperous. It was plain to be seen that she wielded the scepter of charity and that her word was generally law in the valley. "There are only two poor families in the valley, and they're shiftless. There was Hiram Scribbs. He was just do-less. So long as he got help he wouldn't work. For a while he'd even go to the moving picture show in Manchester two or three times a week. I've only been twice in my life. Finally, I said to him: 'Now, Hiram, we can get you to work right here on this farm. And I can find a place for your boy with the Williamses, and your daughter and wife can go to Conrad's farm.' 'What,' says he, 'and break up my family? I don't need your help. I guess I can

take care of my family all right.' So Hiram went to work."

The suffrage club of the countryside was an expression of the efficiency of the women. Mrs. Rice, the president, boasted two stone pillars at the entrance to her farm, a wide stone porch, striped awnings lowered over the windows, red furniture on the porch, an electric button on the door, a victrola in the parlor had not yet banished the crayon enlargements on the walls or the crocheted tidies on the chairs.

We left her large, modern stone house, in the midst of opulent fields, and went to the house of Mrs. Hill. She came into suffrage as long as she can remember, through the object lesson of a voteless mother struggling to rear a large family and successfully run a farm alone. There was nothing new in the environment of a suffrage movement to her. It has the historic position with her that home rule has in Ireland. She has no sympathy with it, and sometimes intolerance when it does not touch her own experience. She is for equal pay for teachers, but her

sister was a teacher. She is for married teachers, but the same sister got married. She was against militancy and prohibition. They had both hurt the suffrage cause. She had no interest in factory women voting. She was even antagonistic to the new canning laws. She was an employer of labor herself in the haying fields where "the men have to get the hay in before it spoils, no matter how long they work." She excused herself to look after the dinner: "The farmhands will be coming in soon and I can't make them wait. If they don't get good meals they can't work." She spoke for the community when she said: "There are a number of women around here who are running farms as well as bringing up children and they all do it as well as, if not better than, their husbands did. The best housekeepers are the ones that belong to our suffrage club. A woman can make a penny go further than a man any time. Men can't vote for women. If women and their husbands agreed about everything they wouldn't get along for a minute."